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EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Rapporteur: Ms. Riitta RESCH (Finland)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 19 September 1997, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 13 and 17 October 1997 (see A/C.4/52/SR.7 and 8).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.[1]

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.4/52/L.2

4. At the 7th meeting, on 13 October, the representative of Germany introduced the report of the Scientific Committee[1] and, on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Effects of

[1] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 46 (A/52/46).

atomic radiation" (A/C.4/52/L.2). Subsequently, Brazil, Indonesia, Kazakhstan and Slovakia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

5. At the 8th meeting, on 17 October, the representative of Germany orally revised the draft resolution by adding, at the end of operative paragraph 9, the words "which will consider the report together with the evaluation of the report by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization".

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.4/52/L.2, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 8).

7. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Pakistan made a statement (see A/C.4/52/SR.8).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)

8. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 51/121 of 13 December 1996, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation,[2]

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-second session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Also noting the provisions contained in section XII, paragraph 38, of the annex to its resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997 on the strengthening of the United Nations system,

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[2] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 46 (A/52/46).

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. Commends the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-two years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. Requests the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

3. Endorses the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

4. Requests the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session;

5. Requests the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

6. Expresses its appreciation for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

7. Welcomes, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of atomic radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

8. Invites Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly;

9. Invites the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization to consider the functions and role of the Scientific Committee and to submit a recommendation to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, and, meanwhile, requests the Scientific Committee to submit its report to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization as well as to the General Assembly, which will consider the report together with the evaluation of the report by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization.